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AUTHOR Gustafson, Richard A.
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ABSTRACT

A handbook titled "The Educator's Handbook for Secondary Career Guidance Programs", and designed to aid the educator-counselor in formulating and implementing a workable secondary school career guidance program, was field tested in four secondary school settings in order to assess the effectiveness of the model. The handbook contained seven program components based upon a review of the literature, exemplary career guidance programs, and consultant assistance. These components are needs assessment, program organization and management, program activities for teachers and counselors, career information resource centers, community resources, counseling, placement, followup, and evaluation. A series of workshops were conducted at each of the four selected sites in New Hampshire to educate the staff in the program approach to career guidance and to familiarize them with the seven components of the model. Of the four secondary schools, three indicated that the needs assessment component was most needed and useful to them. There was general consensus that the primary benefit of the handbook was to force school guidance staff and the associated educational community to think of their guidance efforts as a program rather than a series of unrelated or random activities. As a result of the field test, the rewritten handbook was made available to each of the junior and senior high schools in New Hampshire. (TA)

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COMPREHENSIVE CAREER GUIDANCE PROGRAMS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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By

Richard A. Gustafson
Keene State College
Keene, New Hampshire

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INTRODUCTION

Career guidance, career development and career education have gained renewed interest from the educational community over the past five years.

The U.S. Office of Education has channeled millions of dollars each year into career education programs and exemplary vocational programs. While all of these programs did not necessarily have career or vocational guidance as their central thrust, each had to make some provision for career development activities.

Coupled with this reawakening of relating education to the world of work, was a corresponding interest in career development theory. The writings and career development models developed by Hoppock, Holland, Roe, Ginsberg, Super and others become the focus of collegiate level courses and local guidance department workshops. Positions on the importance of viewing career development as a life-long process were stated by Hoyt, and a joint position paper on career development was published by the American Vocational Association and the National Vocational Guidance Association.

Yet, with these conceptual models available to school guidance personnel (often with funding for implementation), career guidance programs in the secondary schools remained a series of unrelated activities and services. The inclusion of certain career development activities was portrayed as a new program emphasis and thrust. The fact was, however, there was no well defined sequence of career guidance services to enhance the career and personal development of young people. The academic development program had no counter-part for personal and career development.

Clearly, managers of guidance programs at the secondary level needed a model which enabled them to expand from an ACTIVITY BASE to a PROGRAM BASE of operation.

Only by viewing career guidance as a comprehensive program with specific services for specific audiences at specific times could the schools translate career development theory into practice.

The focus of this research was to develop a comprehensive program model of career guidance for the secondary schools of New Hampshire.

OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

This three year research and development study was partially funded by Part C (Research) of the Vocational Education Act of 1963, as amended, to accomplish two objectives:

(1) To design and develop a comprehensive model for career guidance programs for implementation at the secondary school level, and

(2) To field test the model in four secondary school settings in order to assess the effectiveness of the model.

METHODOLOGY

The development of the career guidance program was constructed upon a foundation document, A Developmental Approach to Career Guidance, Counseling and Placement which was written during the 1973-74 academic year by a statewide team of some 25 guidance counselors under the direction of the State Department of Education. This publication was a compendium of career guidance activities linked to specific student outcome objectives in the areas of attitudes and values, the world of work and decision making. While this publication provided many useful activities for career guidance counselors, it did not answer the need for a comprehensive program view.

This research utilized a state-wide steering committee composed of ten (10) members representing counselor educators, state level consultants, local school counselors, labor and industry, and the department of labor. The university based research team utilized this committee in all phases of the research beginning with the literature review, continuing through the writing phases and ascertaining the field test results.

The research team categorized the review of literature and existing programs analysis into broad program components. The sequencing of these program components eventually became the flow of the comprehensive model.

As the program components were identified, it became clear that if the ultimate objective was field testing and implementation, then the components needed to be organized in a sequence in which program managers could use in the public school setting. Thus it was decided to develop a handbook which would be of use to guidance people in the field rather than developing a theoretical model complete with research language.

THE COMPREHENSIVE HANDBOOK

At this stage of the research, the team began to think seriously concerning the overall purpose of the research and the specific audience for which the research publication was to be developed.

Recognizing that the primary purpose of the research was to cause constructive change in secondary school guidance programs and that the key audience in this change process was the managers who had the responsibility and authority to implement changes, a handbook entitled, The Educator's Handbook for Secondary Career Guidance Programs, was developed. The Handbook contained seven program components based upon a review of the literature, exemplary career guidance programs and consultant assistance. As the Handbook was being developed, each of these components was reviewed by the state-wide advisory committee. Once the

second or third drafts of each of the components was completed, some forty practicing guidance counselors and administrators were convened for a two-day work session designed to critique, revise and reality test the language of each of the components. In the spring of 1975 following this major activity, the Educator's Handbook was printed.

FIELD TESTING

Early in the fall of 1975, a series of regional dissemination seminars were conducted across the state with the purpose of informing secondary school guidance counselors and administrators of the research and to solicit their involvement in the field testing of the model.

Following these seminars, a request for proposals was distributed to each high school in the state urging those having interest in developing comprehensive career guidance programs to submit an application. From the applications received, four schools representing broad geographic and socio-economic ranges were selected for the field test.

A series of workshops were then conducted at each of the four test sites to educate the staff in the program approach to career guidance and to familiarize them with the seven components of the model. Recognizing that most of these schools had certain components of a career guidance system already in operation, the comprehensive model was not portrayed as a series of absolutes, but rather a menu from which the schools could select those items which were appropriate for field testing in their schools during that academic year.

All of the inservice training was conducted within the framework of the model's third component - Organization and Management - because the purpose of the model was to take a comprehensive programmatic view of career guidance. At the conclusion of the third inservice workshop, each of the four schools

identified the elements of the model which they wished to field test and developed a management plan of action based upon those decisions.

RESULTS/CONCLUSIONS

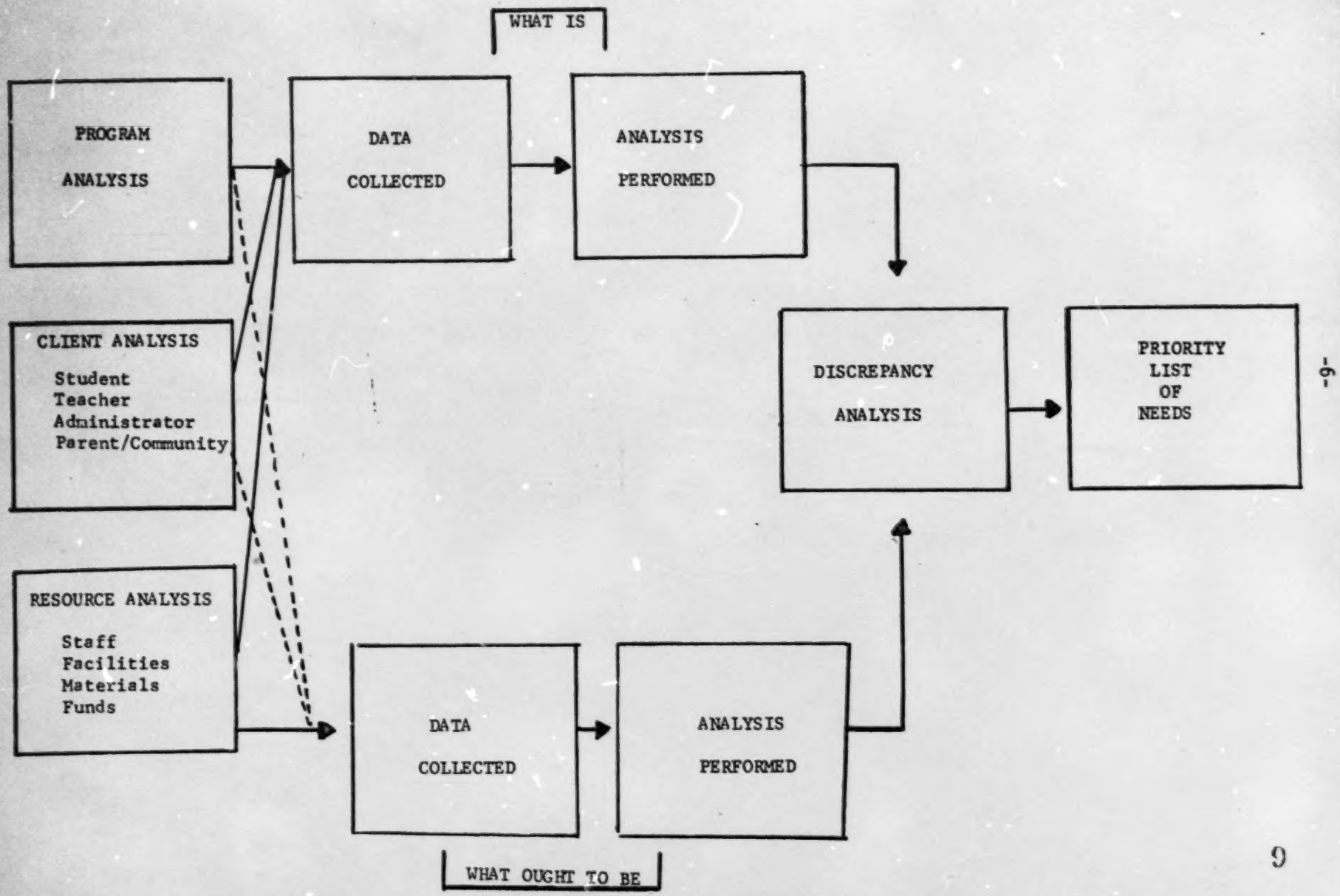
The initial product of the research was the publication of the Educator's Handbook for Secondary Career Guidance Programs. The Handbook contains seven program components as detailed below:

Needs Assessment:

The needs assessment component provides program planners with a needs assessment model (see Figure 1) within the broader framework of educational planning. Needs assessment is portrayed as the very heart of the educational planning process, whether referring to academic, or career guidance programs. The needs assessment model which is presented requires that the data be collected and analyzed in three broad areas of concern: Career guidance program analysis, client needs analysis, and resource analysis. Throughout the process of collecting information that falls into these three areas, the counselor/manager is encouraged to look for data describing the current status of events as well as data which indicates what ought to be in the future. The objective of collecting "what is" and "what ought to be" information, is to bring together the two into a discrepancy analysis which is designed to identify those situations where wide gaps exist between what is and what ought to be. Once these gaps have been identified, specific priorities can be identified to address the need and close the gap. Also included in the needs assessment component are a pool of items for constructing needs assessment questionnaires for students, teachers and parents.

FIGURE 1

NEEDS ASSESSMENT MODEL



Program Organization and Management:

This program component provides a framework within which the remaining eight program components can be properly considered. It provides a consideration of different ways to organize a comprehensive career guidance effort. In doing so, it addresses the management areas of communication, reporting, planning, budget building, staffing, facilities, and evaluation. At the conclusion of the component, a technique and format are provided to assist the program developers in developing plans of action. As each guidance program reviews its operations it must develop a program plan of action to cause constructive change as the program moves forward.

Program Activities for Teachers and Counselors:

Here the Handbook provides a rich collection of tested activities for career guidance programs. The areas covered by these activities are values and attitudes, decision making skills and the world of work and leisure However, the utilization of these activities are only meaningful as they fit into a broader program design previously developed through needs assessment and program organization and management. This collection of activities was the foundation document, A Developmental Approach to Career Guidance, Counseling and Placement, which was mentioned in the methodology section of this paper.

Career Information Resource Centers:

Information is provided as to how to organize and deliver career and educational information via a resource center. Schematic diagrams of sample facilities, staffing patterns, scheduling, and lists of essential materials are provided.

Community Resources:

Program developers are provided with a rationale and techniques for utilization of community resources. The establishment and use of advisory committees, resource people, and field based activities are included.

Counseling:

The delivery of a comprehensive career guidance program continues to require the guidance counselors to assume a key role. However, moving from an activity base to a program base for career guidance programs requires that the guidance counselor assume many different roles. This section includes strategies and techniques for changing the role of the high school guidance counselor. The utilization of teachers, peer counseling, group counseling, and other methods for the delivery of career guidance services are explored.

Placement:

This component addresses how one goes about organizing a placement service for part and full-time job placement, cooperative education, work study, work exposure, and field trips. Linkage with other agencies such as Employment Security and Vocational Rehabilitation is also covered.

Follow-Up:

The design and implementation of graduate follow-up studies is a key component in the delivery of comprehensive career guidance services. This component contains a rationale and procedure for conducting such follow-up studies of students. Sample questionnaires and different methodologies for data collection are addressed.

Evaluation of Career Guidance Programs:

This final program component addresses the rationale and procedures for evaluating career guidance programs and includes a matrix (see Figure 2) that suggests a number of sources of data and information. It also includes techniques for relating evaluation information back to the needs assessment component and how this can result in future program planning.

EVALUATION MATRIX

	Self	Peer	Supervisor	Regulatory (Third-party)	Consumer
Institution					
Program	Career Guidance Staff self-study	Bring in other counselors from other schools	Superintendent School Board Other Administrators	State or Federal experts in the field Independent review by panel of experts	Students Community Parents
Personnel (teachers, counselors, administrators)					
Student					

FIELD TESTING THE MODEL

Of the four secondary schools which field tested the model, three indicated that the needs assessment component was most needed and useful to them. As a result of the field test, a number of suggested changes were incorporated into the latest writing of the Handbook. It was found that use of the needs assessment component enabled counselors to actively involve teachers, administrators, students and parents in the planning for a comprehensive career guidance program. These basic needs assessment activities resulted in priorities being set and schools were able to move into implementing those components which were most needed at the time. One school selected to implement a career information resource center and indicated that the basic guidelines provided by the handbook were useful in this area.

Feedback from two additional schools indicated that the instrumentation and procedures for conducting a follow-up survey were of great help to them in identifying what high school graduates thought of the various programs at the school.

There was general consensus that the primary benefit of the handbook was to force school guidance staff and the associated educational community to think of their guidance efforts as a program rather than a series of unrelated or random activities. It was found that guidance counselors were often unable to articulate a program of guidance when asked by the research team.

As a result of the field test, the re-written Handbook was made available to each of the junior and senior high schools in the state of New Hampshire. The Handbook is currently available through the ERIC System and has been disseminated widely throughout the United States through the Research Coordinating Units of the State Departments of Education. Demand for the Handbook has been substantial and it will enter its second printing during the spring of 1977.

It was clear that movement toward a comprehensive approach to career guidance was long overdue. The comprehensive model developed by this research was successful in helping cause this change. In addition, the model is now being incorporated into the required coursework for career counselors in two colleges in the State of New Hampshire. This research has resulted in a handbook for career guidance professionals which has day-to-day utility in the schools of our state in helping them implement more responsive career guidance programs.

The Educator's Handbook is already in the ERIC System. (ED-118-888)

ABSTRACT

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AUTHOR: Richard A. Gustafson
Keene State College
Keene, New Hampshire 03431

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